

The “Bored” Meeting

From *A View From the Pew*

By Martha Bolton

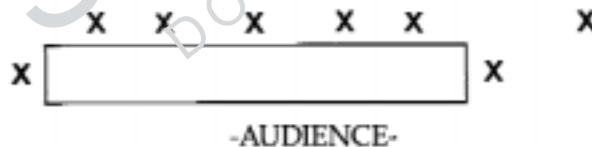
A Comedy Sketch

Characters:

PASTOR WILLIAMS
DEACON EDWARDS
DEACON HUGHES
DEACON SMITH
DEACON STEVENS
DEACON WOOD
DEACON ADAMS
MADAM SECRETARY

Setting:

A long table with seven chairs placed around it as in diagram below. The PASTOR’s chair is in the center, and the remaining six chairs are for the various board members. MADAM SECRETARY’s chair is off to the side.



Costumes:

Everyone is in regular street dress except DEACON ADAMS who is in pajamas, bathrobe, and nightcap.

Props:

Steno pad for MADAM SECRETARY
Gavel for PASTOR WILLIAMS

(Sketch opens with the PASTOR, BOARD MEMBERS, and MADAM SECRETARY in their respective places.)

PASTOR: Good evening, Brethren.

BOARD MEMBERS *(in unison)*: Good evening, Pastor Williams.

PASTOR: This meeting is now officially called to order. (*Hits gavel*) Our secretary will now call the roll. Please answer “here” if you are here, and if you are not here, kindly remain silent. (*He motions for MADAM SECRETARY to begin.*)

MADAM SECRETARY: Deacon Edwards?

DEACON EDWARDS: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Deacon Hughes?

DEACON HUGHES: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Deacon Smith?

DEACON SMITH: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Deacon Stevens?

DEACON STEVENS: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Deacon Wood?

DEACON WOOD: Present

PASTOR: Deacon Wood—do you always have to be different?

MADAM SECRETARY: And Deacon Adams?

DEACON ADAMS: I’m here, but I’d rather be home in bed!

PASTOR: Well, brethren, I do realize this was a short notice . . .

DEACON ADAMS (*straightening his bathrobe*): You’re telling me!

PASTOR: But I feel you all know me well enough to be sure I’d never call an emergency midnight board meeting unless it was for a very urgent need.

DEACON WOOD: I’d like to challenge that statement, if I may.

PASTOR: You wish to challenge that statement?

DEACON WOOD: Yes.

PASTOR: But why would you want to do that?

DEACON WOOD: So I can get my name in the minutes. I never get my name in the minutes!

PASTOR: But you have to make a motion to get your name in the minutes.

DEACON WOOD: All right, then, I so move.

PASTOR: You so move what?

DEACON WOOD: I so move that I should get my name in the minutes.

PASTOR: That's not a motion!

DEACON EDWARDS: Well, I make a motion we move on.

DEACON HUGHES: I'll second that motion.

DEACON WOOD (*to* DEACON HUGHES): Now, why would you second his motion, and you wouldn't second mine?

DEACON HUGHES: 'Cause your motion was stupid!

DEACON WOOD: It still needed a second!

PASTOR: Brethren . . . there's a motion on the floor. (*They all look under the table. PASTOR gets irritated*) You know what I mean. . . . Now, there is a motion, and it has been seconded.

DEACON WOOD (*to* DEACON HUGHES): I'll remember this!

PASTOR: Are we ready to vote on the motion?

DEACON SMITH: What was the motion?

PASTOR: Madam Secretary could you please read back the motion?

MADAM SECRETARY: It's in shorthand.

PASTOR: So? Can't you read it?

MADAM SECRETARY: No. I can just write shorthand. I can't *read* it.

DEACON STEVENS: I remember the motion.

PASTOR: Very well, Deacon Stevens, State the motion.

DEACON STEVENS: The motion was that we move on.

DEACON SMITH: Immediately or eventually?

PASTOR (*growing more irritated*): Immediately! Now then, all in favor of moving on, please raise your hand. (*Everyone but DEACON WOOD raises his hand*) All opposed? (*DEACON WOOD raises his hand*) Are you dissenting?

DEACON WOOD: Will it get my name in the minutes?

PASTOR: No.

DEACON WOOD (*begrudgingly*): All right, then. (*Raises his hand again*) Make it unanimous.

PASTOR: Very well. Now, where were we? . . . Madam Secretary, could you please advise us as to where we are on our agenda?

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes, of course. You're lost!

PASTOR (*sarcastic*): Thank you. (*Thinks for a moment*) Ah, yes, now I remember. The reason I called this emergency midnight board meeting is because a very serious problem has been brought to my attention, and I feel that, as a board, we need to give it our immediate attention.

DEACON HUGHES: If it involves money, the answer is NO!

PASTOR: I'm afraid, Deacon Hughes, that money is the *least* of our worries.

DEACON SMITH: It sounds serious.

DEACON ADAMS: Very serious.

DEACON STEVENS: Extremely serious

DEACON WOOD: If I agree it sounds serious, will that get my name in the minutes?

PASTOR: Deacon Wood, you are a credit to this board, and this church. But right now you're getting on my nerves! (*To the board*) Now . . . I do feel that before we get into a long and tiring discussion, I should advise you that regardless of the hour, we *must* come to a decision tonight . . . so please, bear this in mind. (DEACON STEVENS *raises his hand*) Yes, may we hear from Deacon Stevens?

DEACON STEVENS: Well, quite frankly, I'd like to express my views concerning this problem facing us tonight.

PASTOR: Yes? Go on.

DEACON STEVENS: I said I'd like to express my views, but I can't because you haven't told us what the problem is yet!

PASTOR: Well, I can do that now, if you like.

DEACON STEVENS: I think it would help.

PASTOR (*to board*): Are the rest of you brethren in agreement?

DEACON ADAMS: I consider myself ready to hear the problem.

DEACON SMITH: Me, too.

DEACON HUGHES: Yes, I think we all need to hear the problem in order to make an intelligent decision.

DEACON WOOD: You mean, this problem calls for an “intelligent” decision?

DEACON EDWARDS: *All* our problems call for an intelligent decision!

DEACON WOOD: Nobody ever told me that before.

DEACON EDWARDS: Pastor, go ahead. Tell us the problem.

PASTOR: Very well, if you’re sure you’re ready . . .

BOARD MEMBERS IN UNISON (*take a deep breath*): We’re ready.

PASTOR: Men . . . (*Shakes his head in anguish.*)

DEACON SMITH: Go ahead, pastor, we’re behind you.

PASTOR: Men . . . next month we have scheduled the third Saturday to be the date of our annual church picnic.

DEACON ADAMS: The third Saturday?

PASTOR: Yes, this is what we had decided upon at our last emergency meeting.

DEACON ADAMS: May I see the minutes? (MADAM SECRETARY *hands him the minutes. He looks them over.*) Yes, you’re right . . . but I still fail to see what the problem is.

PASTOR: The problem is this, gentlemen . . . (*He buries his head in his hand for a moment*) Brethren . . . (*he looks up solemnly*) should we have the picnic potluck, or should each family member merely bring enough food for their immediate family?

DEACON EDWARDS: Oh, no! I had hoped it wouldn’t come to this!

PASTOR: Deacon Edwards, I am sure we all share in that feeling, but it has come to this, and we cannot avoid it any longer. The decision must be made, and it must be made *tonight*.

DEACON SMITH: Well, we’ve always had it potluck in the past . . . as long as I can remember being on the board.

PASTOR: Yes, but has it proved to be the best method?

DEACON STEVENS: Well, I agree with Deacon Smith. Potluck has always been acceptable in the past.

PASTOR: But let’s consider this. Should we leave here tonight having decided upon potluck, that is, providing all were in agreement according to parliamentary laws, what assures us that we will not end up with 20 salads and only two main dishes?

DEACON SMITH: He has a point.

DEACON EDWARDS: Then would potluck be acceptable if we had some assurance that this type of imbalance would not occur?

PASTOR: Yes, but how could we . . .

DEACON EDWARDS (*cuts in*): I would move we instigate some form of sign-up list to be placed in the back of the church for the congregation to sign to indicate what type of dish they will be bringing.

DEACON HUGHES: And just how much will this paper cost us?

DEACON ADAMS: I'll donate the paper!

DEACON HUGHES: You'll donate the paper?

DEACON ADAMS: I'll donate anything just so I can get home and go to bed!

PASTOR: Very well, we do have a motion on the floor . . . (*All board members look under the table again*) Will you quit that! We do have a motion, does it have a second?

DEACON HUGHES: I'll second it.

DEACON WOOD: Sure! You always second *his* motions!

PASTOR: We have a motion, and it has been seconded. Are we ready to vote?

DEACON STEVENS: Was the motion to list the dishes by category alone or by individual recipes, so to speak?

PASTOR: Deacon Edwards, would you please clarify your motion?

DEACON EDWARDS: I didn't actually specify how they would list it, but I can make an amendment to the motion. The amendment would state that the dishes be listed by category alone.

PASTOR: Very well, is there a second to the amendment?

DEACON HUGHES: I'll second the amendment.

DEACON WOOD: Naturally.

PASTOR: All right, all those in favor say, "Aye." (*Everyone but DEACON WOOD says aye.*) All those opposed say, "Nay."

DEACON WOOD: Nay.

PASTOR (*to DEACON WOOD*): I'm sorry, but that won't get your name in the minutes either.

DEACON WOOD: That's all right. I've got to vote my convictions.

PASTOR: Very well, motion has been carried. Now then, we will need someone to be responsible for posting the list in the back of the church.

DEACON EDWARDS: I would move that Deacon Hughes be in charge of that.

DEACON HUGHES: I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to decline this honor. However, I would like to make the motion that Deacon Smith become the chairman for this in my stead.

DEACON SMITH: I am, indeed, honored; however, I am also forced to decline, but I'd like to nominate Deacon Stevens. I know he'd do a fine job!

DEACON STEVENS: I would rather see Deacon Adams take the position.

DEACON ADAMS: This is going to be a busy month for me. How about you, Pastor Williams?

DEACON EDWARDS: Yes, I'll second that.

PASTOR: Very well. All in favor say, "Aye." (*It's unanimous*) All opposed? (*silence*) Very well, then, it has been moved and carried. Deacon Wood will be in charge of posting the list.

DEACON WOOD: But pastor, *you* were elected. Why did you appoint me?

PASTOR: I just wanted to make sure you got your name in the minutes! Meeting adjourned! (*His gavel.*)



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